



**CHARLOTTE**

# **2016 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT**



## **Hampshire Hills**

Hosted by City of Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services at Johnson C Smith University

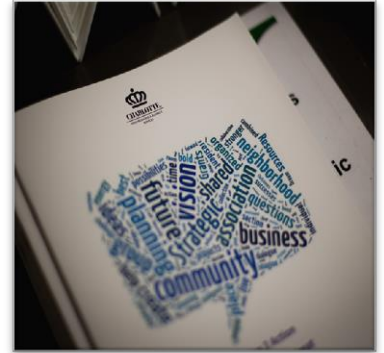
# Hampshire Hills

## 2016 Board Retreat

### Background

On Saturday March 19, 2016 the board members of the Hampshire Hills participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at Johnson C. Smith University. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Herman Thomas – Vice President
- Julia Thomas – Assistant Secretary
- Lena Pickens
- Bill Pickens
- Connie Lewis – Financial Secretary



### Desired Outcomes from the group: Ideas to improve community, improved participation, QOL, Action plans

The City of Charlotte values citizen leadership and its ability to make an impact in the communities, in which we all live, work, play and shop. With this in mind, the board retreat process was initiated to help neighborhood based organizations develop strategic plans to improve quality of life in their communities.

### Purpose

The purpose of the board retreat was to

- Generate meaningful conversations around improving quality of life in our community
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)
- Develop a vision and strategic priorities for our community

By participating in the retreat, our board earned a \$1,500 match credit toward a Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects we identified.

To receive this credit we'll submit our completed Vision to Action Idea Development Plan Workbook with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2017 NMG application deadline.

### Process

Our board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help capture the best of the past, the best of the present, and how we can add to our strengths to build a better future. The focus was:

- Developing a vision to guide our decision making and activities
- Developing strategic priorities that aligned with our vision

- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Introductions
- Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?: Arrow Activity
- Where We Want to Be: Vision Statement Exercise
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Working Lunch – The Year Ahead
- Idea Development – Time for participants for develop an action plan for goal achievement.

### Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

We began our day with paired interviews, using the “Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?” activity. The activity was intended to help us reflect on:

- What we value
- What are the best things about our community and the people who live here
- What are our past successes
- Where are the potentials and possibilities

After interviewing our partners we shared our discussion with the group, finding commonalities in our conversations.

Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?	Where We Are: Why would or wouldn't a person/business want to move into our community?	Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?
<b>Best:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All homeowners, no renters</li> <li>• Homes beautifully designed</li> <li>• Garden club</li> <li>• Properties well-maintained</li> <li>• Access to services (i.e. bank)</li> <li>• Great schools</li> <li>• Vibrant/ more neighborhood involvement</li> <li>• Pool/swim club/meets</li> <li>• Very clean</li> <li>• Planned activities, trips, etc.</li> </ul>	<b>Why:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse neighborhood – cultures</li> <li>• Quality homes/wide streets</li> <li>• Great engaged organization</li> <li>• Light rail coming</li> <li>• Still great neighborhood</li> <li>• Neighborhood park/tennis courts</li> <li>• PACE Health facility nearby</li> </ul> <b>Why Not:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative connotation of East Charlotte by association</li> <li>• Perceptions by business – residents economic state</li> <li>• Schools not rated well</li> <li>• Low number of homes available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Active Neighboring” – continue to work together w/neighbors</li> <li>• Code enforcement – improve relationship between renters and homeowners</li> <li>• More activities</li> <li>• Safe &amp; beautiful neighborhood</li> <li>• Less group homes</li> <li>• More amenities: shopping, etc.</li> <li>• Improved schools</li> <li>• More homeowners, less renters</li> <li>• More cultural activities to engage neighbors (Hispanics)</li> <li>• More participation</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great leadership</li> <li>• Collaboration w/ other neighborhoods</li> <li>• Street lights/ sidewalks</li> </ul> <p><b>Worst:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No stop light at entrance</li> <li>• Everyone not involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QOL doesn't represent us well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better maintenance of homes</li> <li>• More substantial businesses (Anchor stores)</li> <li>• A Bank</li> </ul>
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**Common Themes: Housing, Upkeep/Beautification, Activities, Quality of Life, Leadership, Perceptions**

### Our Vision

Our vision is the unifying statement for our community that will guide our decision making and reminds us of what we are trying to reach. It is based on our shared values and preferences for our community's future. It combines the best of what was, what is, and what could be.



### Strategic Priorities

After committing to a shared vision, the board began to brainstorm on strategic priorities. This is where we began to define what is most important to us in order to achieve our vision. Strategic priorities are initiatives that will help us move closer to our vision of our community. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.



We started out thinking big and then narrowed down our focus using the Affinity Mapping Process, detailed below:

- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
  - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
  - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky notes on the wall.
- Organize the ideas by natural categories, once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.



This activity led us to the following categories and action items being identified as important within our community:

### All Potential Projects

The board then began to brainstorm on possible projects or activities that aligned with their strategic priorities: *(based on our tree activity)*

Strategic Priority	Potential Projects	Sources that could give life to success
<i>"The Trunk"</i>	<i>"The Fruit"</i>	<i>"The Roots"</i>
1. Enhance Community Involvement /Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly dinners</li> <li>Fun Night in the Park</li> <li><b>Increase Clean-up day to 2 times a year</b></li> <li>Block Party</li> <li>Bus trips</li> <li>Small neighborhood cluster gatherings among 4 or 5 neighbors</li> <li>Continue participation in Nat'l Night Out</li> <li>Fellowship</li> <li>'Back to School' party +for kids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbors</li> <li>Sanitation</li> <li>Keep CLT Beautiful</li> <li>Local businesses</li> </ul>
2. Enhance Community Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance Neighborhood street signs</li> <li><b>Secure more stringent enforcement of codes on properties in violation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish board contact to be "neighborhood code watcher" or assign to block captains</li> <li>Establish feedback mechanism with City code enforcement (monthly)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City Code enforcements</li> <li>Knock &amp; Talks</li> <li>Community engagement</li> </ul>
3. Focus Board's Strategic plans on diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand committee mtgs./ more participation</li> <li>Hold a 'Our Community Leaders Day' – question/answer session with our civic/ commissioners</li> <li>Create and communicate activities to embrace diversity</li> <li><b>Enhance diversity (communication &amp; participation) with our Hispanic neighbors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold mini "International Day" in conjunction with Fellowship dinners or in the park</li> <li>Translate and distribute newsletters in Spanish</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latin American Coalition</li> <li>Latin Chamber</li> <li>International House</li> <li>City – International Relations</li> <li>Queen's University – Communication workshop</li> </ul>

Each participant was provided three (3) stickers to be used for voting. Stickers could be placed all on one or two items or shared amongst all of the ideas identified. The three categories receiving the most votes are the strategic priorities that are most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision, these are:



**Action Items for 2016-2017** The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2016-2017 are:



**Please list any parking lot issues or items here:**

- QOL Report:
  - Why can't QOL data more closely match our neighborhood?
  - The NPA we are a part of is too large. We are included with neighborhoods and commercial areas that do not match our demographics therefore data is skewed and not useful.
  - It also exudes a negative perception about us to the public that we do feel is inaccurate and can be harmful
  - Feedback: the Quality of Life data is built upon US Census block level data. This same data is what determines NPAs. This is the smallest group of meaningful data we can produce.

## Hampshire Hills

### OUR VISION:

*Hampshire Hills is an established diverse community of beautiful, spacious and well built homes where neighbors work together to provide a great quality of life*



What other stakeholders can add value to our vision?  
Community, HOA, City, CMPD, Homeowners, Businesses, CMS

### TO HELP US REACH OUR VISION; WE WILL FOCUS ON THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1

Enhance Community  
Involvement/Activities

2

Enhance Community  
Improvements

3

Focus Board's Strategic  
plans on enhancing diversity

### IN 2016-2017, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

Increase clean-up  
day to 2 times a year

Secure more stringent  
enforcement of codes on  
properties in violation

- "neighborhood code watcher"
- Monthly feedback loop with City code enforcement

Enhance diversity with our  
Hispanic neighbors

- Hold mini "International Day" in conjunction with Fellowship dinners or in the park
- Translate and distribute newsletters in Spanish



Project	Getting Started	Resources
<b>Project #1</b>  Increase clean-up day to 2 times per year -- Enhance community involvement/activities  *Activities help with communication to facilitate more regular participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop newsletter content</li> <li>Create a weekly e-mail blast</li> </ul>	<b>Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator:</b> <a href="http://www.mailchimp.com">www.mailchimp.com</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a committee</li> <li>Communicate information about ideas, events, and meetings in a variety of ways</li> </ul>	<b>How to organize a committee:</b> <a href="http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx">http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx</a>  <b>Board development online resources:</b> Board Source - <a href="https://boardsource.org/eweb/">https://boardsource.org/eweb/</a> <b>Set up a conference call option for meetings:</b> <a href="http://www.freeconferencecall.com">www.freeconferencecall.com</a> <b>Nextdoor: Create a private social network for your neighborhood:</b> <a href="https://nextdoor.com/about_us/">https://nextdoor.com/about_us/</a>  <b>Make signs to announce meetings with FastSigns® Reusable Yard Signs:</b> <a href="http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs">http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs</a>  <b>Keep Charlotte Beautiful has clean up supplies, grants and volunteers for cleanups</b> <a href="http://www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org">www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey residents about what type of communication platform they would prefer to use (newsletters, website, meetings, flyers, social media)</li> </ul>	<b>Online survey tool:</b> <a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com">www.surveymonkey.com</a>  <b>Types of neighborhood communication:</b> <a href="http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication">http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication</a> <b>Additional examples of communication:</b> <a href="http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Citizen-Participation-and-Engagement/Communication-and-Citizen-Participation-Techniques.aspx">http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Citizen-Participation-and-Engagement/Communication-and-Citizen-Participation-Techniques.aspx</a>
<b>Project #2</b>  Secure more stringent enforcement of codes on properties in violation  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“neighborhood code watcher”</li> <li>Monthly feedback loop with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider applying for a Neighborhood Matching Grant to purchase or improve street lights</li> <li>Communicate information about ideas, events, and meetings in a variety of ways (see above resources)</li> <li>Make contact with Service Area staff</li> </ul>	<b>Neighborhood Matching Grants (NMG) provides funding to improve lighting and community safety:</b>  Charlotte’s NMG Program can provide grants to eligible neighborhood organizations for community improvement projects. To determine eligibility or to review program details please visit <a href="http://charlottenc.gov/nmg">charlottenc.gov/nmg</a> or call 704-336-3380. <b>Request free CFL’s from Duke Energy:</b> <a href="http://www.duke-energy.com/freecfls/">http://www.duke-energy.com/freecfls/</a> or 1-800-943-7585  <b>Tips for Organizing a Community Cleanup</b> <a href="http://lancaster.unl.edu/community/articles/organizecleanup.shtml">http://lancaster.unl.edu/community/articles/organizecleanup.shtml</a> <b>Keep Charlotte Beautiful has clean up supplies, grants and volunteers for cleanups</b> <a href="http://www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org">www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org</a>  <b>Service area staff:</b> Contact service area staff listed below to begin dialogue with Code Enforcement issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey residents about what</li> </ul>	<b>Online survey tool:</b>

City code enforcement -- Enhance community improvements	type of communication platform they would prefer to use (newsletters, website, meetings, flyers, social media)	<a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com">www.surveymonkey.com</a> <b>Types of neighborhood communication:</b> <a href="http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication">http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_HOA_Communication</a> <b>Additional examples of communication:</b> <a href="http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Citizen-Participation-and-Engagement/Communication-and-Citizen-Participation-Techniques.aspx">http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Citizen-Participation-and-Engagement/Communication-and-Citizen-Participation-Techniques.aspx</a>
<b>Project #3</b>  Enhance diversity with our Hispanic neighbors -- Focus Board's strategic plans on diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold mini "International Day" in conjunction with Fellowship dinners</li> <li>• Translate and distribute newsletters in Spanish</li> </ul>	<b>Recruiting potential board members</b> <a href="http://www.hoaleader.com/public/351.cfm">http://www.hoaleader.com/public/351.cfm</a> <b>Increase neighborhood participation:</b> <a href="http://atlantahoamanagement.wordpress.com/2011/09/27/how-to-increase-attendance-or-participation-in-homeowner-committees/">http://atlantahoamanagement.wordpress.com/2011/09/27/how-to-increase-attendance-or-participation-in-homeowner-committees/</a> <b>Board development online resources:</b> BoardSource <a href="https://boardsource.org/eweb/">https://boardsource.org/eweb/</a> <b>How to organize a committee:</b> <a href="http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx">http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx</a> <b>Meetings tips for neighborhoods</b> <a href="http://nacok.org/association-tools/effective-meetings/">http://nacok.org/association-tools/effective-meetings/</a> <a href="http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_Meeting_Agenda">http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Effective_Meeting_Agenda</a> <b>How to promote diversity on boards:</b> <a href="https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources">https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MAVA-Metrolina-Association-for-Volunteer-Administrators-212961772174019/">https://www.facebook.com/MAVA-Metrolina-Association-for-Volunteer-Administrators-212961772174019/</a>

Your community is located within Charlotte's Northeast Service Area. Your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Charlenea Duncan, Community Engagement Specialist	John Short, Community Engagement Lead
cduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173	jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862

